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SIPDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y //TEXT PT. III//

INL
EUR/UBI
JUSTICE FOR OIA, AFMLS, NDDS
TREASURY FOR FINCEN
DEA FOR OILS AND OFFICE OF DIVERSION CONTROL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SNAR](#) [EISNAR](#)

SUBJECT: IRELAND: 2004-2005 INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL
STRATEGY REPORT (INSCR) PART I

REF: STATE 248987

1. Please see below outline for post's submission as chapter
for 2004-2005 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report
(INSCR) Part I.

I. Summary

The Republic of Ireland is not a transshipment point for narcotics to the United States, nor is it a hub for international drug trafficking. According to Government of Ireland (GOI) officials, overall drug use in Ireland continues to remain steady, with the exception of cocaine use, which doubled over the last two years. Seizures have also increased as traffickers attempt to import drugs in larger quantities. The GOI's National Drug Strategy is to significantly reduce drug consumption through a concerted focus on supply reduction, prevention, treatment, and research. In 2004, the GOI signed the European Arrests Warrant Act 2003, allowing Irish police to have suspects detained by foreign police and extradited to Ireland for trial, and the Criminal Justice Act, enabling Irish authorities to investigate international criminality with EU member states. Ireland is a party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention.

II. Status of Country

Ireland is not a transit point for drugs to the United States; it is occasionally used as a transit point for narcotics trafficking to other parts of Europe, including across its land border to Northern Ireland. Ireland is not a significant source of illicit narcotics, though in a single raid in May, officials found a quantity of precursors intended to manufacture around euro 500 million worth of ecstasy and amphetamines.

III. Country Actions Against Drugs in 2004

Policy Initiatives. The GOI continued with drug abuse strategies it established in its National Drug Strategy for 2001-2008. Its goal is to "to significantly reduce the harm caused to individuals and society by the misuse of drugs through a concerted focus on supply reduction, prevention, treatment and research." By 2003, substance abuse programs were a part of every school curriculum in the country and the GOI launched the National Awareness Campaign on Drugs. The campaign featured television and radio advertising, and lectures by police, supported by an information brochure and website, all designed to promote greater awareness and communication about the drug issue in Ireland. Regional Drug Tasks Forces (RDTF), set up to examine drug issues in local areas, were fully operational throughout the country. The GOI established a review procedure to measure how effectively each department in the government is internally implementing the National Drug Strategy. The GOI will release the results and recommendations of this review in April 2005.

Accomplishments. Seizures in 2003 totaled euro 121 million, three times the goal set in the National Drug Strategy, 2001-2008. The Justice Minister attributed this both to the increase in usage and improvements in law enforcement. The Irish Police continued to cooperate closely with other national police forces. On December 12, after eight months of coordination among forces from the United Kingdom, Spain, the Netherlands, and Ireland, authorities cracked down on a major drug smuggling gang. This gang is suspected of supplying cocaine to most of the drug users in Dublin and Limerick. This investigation is still in progress.

Law Enforcement Efforts. Official statistics are not yet available for 2004 but the Garda confirmed that drug-related arrests remained constant over the previous three years (approximately 450 arrests per year by the National Drug Unit), and most drug-related arrests were for possession. Cannabis was the drug most often seized, followed by heroin, ecstasy and then cocaine. The

value of seized drugs for 2003 was euro 121 million.

Official statistics for 2004 are not yet available, but highlights of key raids, arrests and prosecutions include the January seizure of 500,000 ecstasy tablets worth a street value of euro 5 million. Also, in January, police seized 80 kilograms of Khat, worth euro 200,000. In February, local police, supported by the National Drugs Unit, seized eight kilos of cocaine estimated at euro 800,000. In March, Irish police raided a cocaine-processing plant, recovering euro 50,000 worth of contraband, and in another raid, police seized euro 400,000 worth of cocaine. The same month, the

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Dublin Circuit Criminal Court jailed a South African resident for three years for smuggling euro 30,000 worth of cannabis and an Irish citizen was sentenced for seven years for possession of euro 150,000 worth of cocaine and ecstasy. An April seizure netted 88 kilos of cannabis, estimated at a value of euro 1.14 million. In May, officials found a quantity of precursors intended to manufacture around euro 500 million worth of ecstasy and amphetamines. Officials tracked chemicals shipments from southern China, to Rotterdam and then on to Ireland. In June, police seized over euro 1 million in cocaine from drug gangs. On November 4, an American citizen was arrested at Dublin airport for smuggling 4 kilos of cocaine from Lagos via Paris. Her case is pending criminal proceedings. On December 16, in three operations, Irish police seized up to euro 16 million in cocaine. An arrest was made of a Nigerian national attempting to smuggle 14.5 kilos into Dublin airport. Another unrelated arrest during a raid resulted in the seizure of up to 60 kilos. Under the Drugs Trafficking Act, the suspect can be held without charge for a maximum of seven days.

Corruption. There were no verifiable instances of police or other official corruption related to drug activities in 2004.

Agreements and Treaties. The United States and Ireland signed a mutual legal assistance treaty (MLAT) in January 2001, which was ratified by the Senate in 2003 and is awaiting ratification by the GOI. An extradition treaty between Ireland and the United States is currently in force.

Ireland is a party to the 1998 UN Drug Convention, the 1961 UN Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, and the 1971 UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances. Ireland has signed, but not yet ratified, the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons. In June, the Irish government signed the Criminal Justice Act of 2004 into law, enabling authorities across EU states to investigate international crimes. In January, the European Arrests Warrant Act of 2003 became law, allowing for foreign arrests and extradition.

Cultivation/Production. Only small amounts of cannabis are cultivated in Ireland. With the exception of the precursor chemicals seized in May, there is no evidence that synthetic drugs are being produced domestically.

Drug Flow/Transit. Among drug abusers in Ireland, cocaine, cannabis, amphetamines, ecstasy (MDMA), and heroin are the drugs of choice. Cocaine comes primarily from Colombia and other countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Heroin, cocaine, ecstasy, and cannabis are often packed into cars in either Spain or the Netherlands and then brought into Ireland for distribution around the country. This distribution network is controlled by 6 to 12 Irish criminal gangs based in Spain and the Netherlands. Herbal cannabis is primarily imported from South Africa.

Domestic Programs (Demand Reduction). There are 7,100 treatment sites for opiate addiction, exceeding the GOI's National Drug Strategy target of 6,500 treatment places. The Strategy also mandates that each area Health Board have in place a number of treatment and rehabilitation options. For heroin addicts, there are 65 methadone treatment locations. Most clients of treatment centers are Ireland's approximately 14,500 heroin addicts, 12,400 of which live in Dublin. In 2004, the GOI undertook an evaluation of drug treatment centers' ability to cope with the leveling off of heroin use and the increase of other drugs. The review is due in early 2005.

IV. U.S. Policy Initiatives and Programs

U.S. Policy Initiatives. In 2004, the United States continued legal and policy cooperation with the GOI, and benefited from Irish cooperation with U.S. law enforcement agencies such as the DEA. Information sharing, and joint operations and investigations between U.S. and Irish officials continued to strengthen ties between the countries.

The Road Ahead. U.S. support for Ireland's counternarcotics program, along with U.S. and Irish cooperative efforts, continue to work to prevent Ireland from becoming a transit point for narcotics trafficking to the United States.

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